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## VII.—FOUR VERSES OF THE PHOENISSAE (845-848).

Almost fifty emendations have been proposed, and the interpretations are even more numerous; but I am inclined to think that the text is sound, barring a single *o* which has supplanted an *a*, and that the correct explanation has not yet been offered. The whole difficulty revolves round the beginning of verses 846 and 847. What does *ἐξορμίσαι πόδα* and *ἀπήνη πούς τε* mean? Before we can answer this question satisfactorily we must visualize the scene and make one small correction in the text.

Teiresias, led by his daughter, has just entered. Bidding her conduct him carefully, he turns to Menoeceus and asks how much farther he must go before he arrives at his destination, for he is almost exhausted and can proceed only with great difficulty. We have sufficient data here, I think, for a restoration and explanation of Creon's words:

*θάρσει· πέλας γάρ, Τειρεσία, φίλοισι σοῖς  
ἐξορμίσαις ἀν πόδα· λαβοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ, τέκνον·  
ὥς πᾶσ' ἀπήνη πούς τε πρεσβύτου φιλεῖ  
χειρὸς θυραίας ἀναμένειν κονίσματα.*

The seer has reached the desired goal (*ἐξ*) and can bring his weary foot to its anchorage near his friends. The force of the preposition is similar to that in *ἐκφέρει* (Soph. Ai. 7), which the scholiast explains by *εἰς τέλος ἐξάγει*. Cp. O. C. 98 *ἐξήγαγ' εἰς τόδ' ἄλσος*. The mistake in our manuscripts is due not solely to incorrectness of division (*ἐξορμίσαις ἀν* becoming *-σαι σαν*, then *-σαι σου*, since Creon is addressing the seer, and *σοῖς* follows); but similarity of sound is partly responsible for the corruption, as, for example, "only a tall stoic could" might become "only a Tolstoi could". The metaphor in *ἐξορμίσαις ἀν πόδα* is continued in *πᾶσ' ἀπήνη πούς τε*, and all ambiguity is avoided by the employment of *κονίσματα* at the end of the sentence; for the poet has reference to *πλωταῖς ἀπήναισι* (Fr. adesp. 142), *ναίαν ἀπήνην* (Med. 1123), *νάιον ὄχημα* (I. T. 410), *ναντίλων ὀχήματα* (Aesch. Prom. 468), not to a 'mule car', as those who consider the text sound generally interpret. When a ship comes to its anchorage, it is wont

to be lightened of its cargo (κουφισθεισῶν νεῶν, Polyb. 20. 5. 11, τῷ ταχυναυτοῦντι κουφίσαντες, Thuc. 6. 34); and when the foot of Teiresias comes to its mooring, the burden, that is, the body, must be partly sustained (lightened) by the aid of another's hand (ἀνεκουφίσθην δέμας, Hipp. 1392), for he is too weak to bear the weight himself, cannot walk κούφοις ποσὶ (Pind. O. 13. 164). Hence Creon says to the soothsayer's guide: κουφιεῖς χερὶ (Soph. Ant. 43), ἐπικούφις' (Ai. 1411), πρόσλαβε κουφίσας (Tr. 1025), or λαβοῦ δ' αὐτοῦ . . . κουφίσματα. The girl had been walking πάροιθε, leading him by the hand; now she must help to hold him up, for he cannot stand ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ. The seer is out of breath (πνεῦμ' ἄθροισον, 851), is on the verge of collapse (σύλλεξαι σθένος, 850), and his frail body requires the support of his daughter's arm. But his foot is now, so to speak, in the roadstead by his friends, like a ship that has had a long voyage, laboring hard in rough seas, and it can now rest in the harbor in peace. Cf. Theogn. 1273 f. ἐκ δὲ θυελλῶν | ἦκά γ' ἐνωρμίσθην. Similarly Teiresias is ἐν τῷ λιμένι πέλας φίλοισι.

If the remark of the scholiast is true (ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐξώρμισσαι, τὸ ὁ ἀντὶ τοῦ ὦ), the reading of L, which is adopted by Liddell and Scott, is to be preferred. But this, while it does not affect the sense materially, does not seem so natural; and the testimony of all the other manuscripts is in favor of the short vowel.

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